Michael Handelman

Interview with Administrator

For my interview, I spoke with my cousin Dan LaGrotte, the school director at the Rainbow Academy in Ivyland. Rainbow is a private school for children ages 12 months to Kindergarten. I asked Dan various questions about what technology he uses in his school and how his teachers are expected to use it. I also asked him about professional development and maintenance of the technology.

Dan wanted to start off by saying that he personally is not a firm believer of technology for children in the age range that attend Rainbow Academy. He does however; believe it is important for the teachers to use the technology and to use it correctly. When I asked Dan what technology he had in school, he answered that he had computers in the classroom and in the main office for business use. He also added that he has one iPad that a special education student uses with communication software.

I also asked Dan what technology he wants or wishes he could get. He hesitated for a few seconds, and then replied that he was happy with the technology that was already in the school. He did not really feel any need to get anything additional. Although he did not come out and say it, it seemed that just having the computers gave the teachers enough trouble as it is. I believe that he thought that adding more technology would just create more issues.

When I asked him if he offers any professional development on the technology at the school, he told me that there was no particular professional development that he held for his teachers. I asked him why, and he replied that the professional developments were saved for other issues. Again, this showed Dan’s belief that technology is not one of the key parts of early childhood development.

I then asked if he thought that the staff used the computers correctly and efficiently. He chuckled and said no. He claimed that the teachers tend to have a difficult time with the computers, and that they can become easily frustrated with them. I then asked him if he had any kind of technology coordinator or someone that was in charge of the technology. He told me that they have an IT guy that comes in, but he works mostly on the business end in the office.

I asked Dan if the teachers were expected to use the computers throughout the school year. He told me that the teachers are not expected or required to use the computers, and that they are there for learning activities if the teachers choose to use them. He did tell me that the computers were used as a learning station during the summer, and that some computer instruction went on, but mostly games and use of creative software.

Although Dan did not have too many answers for me in the area of technology, it was interesting to see a Directors perspective of technology in early childhood education. Dan knew that it was important to have computers available for teachers and in doing business, but thought all the uses technology had to offer should wait until the students are in elementary school.